

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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P R 051243Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4851

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 6544

OPORTO ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO, MILI

SUBJECT: POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

REF: FBIS LONDON LD041615Y DTG 041615Z NOV 75

SUMMARY: POPULAR DEMOCRATS AND SOCIALISTS GATHERED CROWD OF 20,000 TO SUPPORT PRIME MINISTER AZEVEDO IN HIS NOV 4 VISIT TO THE ALGARVE. THESE PARTIES WILL ORGANIZE DEMONSTRATION OF NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT IN LISBON, NOV 9. SUCCESSFUL DEMONSTRATIONS REINFORCE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY. AZEVEDO SEEMS MOST INTERESTED IN DEMONSTRATING TO THE LEFT THE FUTILITY OF ATTACKING HIS GOVERNMENT.

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END SUMMARY

1. FARO SUPPORT AZEVEDO: SOCIALIST PART (PS) AND POPULAR DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PPD) TURNED OUT ESTIMATED 20,000 DEMONSTRATORS TO SUPPORT PRIME MINISTER AZEVEDO'S NOV 4 VISIT TO FARO, CAPITAL OF THE ALGARVE. AZEVEDO GAVE A VERY BUSINESSLIKE SPEECH ON GOVERNMENT DECENTRALIZATION TO ENTHUSIASTIC CROWD ASSEMBLED OUTSIDE THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE. IN ONLY INCIDENT, SEVERAL DOZEN SOLDIERS AND CIVILIANS SOUGHT TO DISRUPT RALLY BEFORE THEY WERE REMOVED. IN INTERVIEW UPON ARRIVAL, AZEVEDO TOLD REPORTERS THAT HE CONSIDERED THE SOCIALIST PARTY "THE PIVOT" ON WHICH HIS GOVERNMENT WAS BASED, AS DEMONSTRATED BY PS'S ELECTORAL AND CROWD-DRAWING STRENGTH. HE SAID THAT HE FELT THAT A "COMING-TOGETHER" OF THE PS, THE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP) AND THE PROGRESSIVE SECTORS OF THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE LEFT, (REF FBIS). AZEVEDO SAID HE DID NOT CONSIDER PS AND PPD TO BE RIGHTIST FORCES. HE SAID THAT THE LACK OF AUTHORITY HAD ITS ORIGIN IN ARMED FORCES INDISCIPLINE, RATHER THAN IN ATTACKS OF THE LEFT ON HIS GOVERNMENT. PPD SOURCE TOLD EMBASSY NOV 4 THAT AZEVEDO HAD ASKED PS AND PPD TO HOLD LISBON RALLY OF SUPPORT FOR HIS GOVERNMENT. PS AND PPD AGREED IMMEDIATELY, AND INTEND TO ANNOUNCE A NATIONAL RALLY OF SUPPORT FOR AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT FOR LISBON'S LARGEST OPEN SQUARE TO BE HELD SUNDAY, NOV 9. PPD PLANS TO BUS MANY SUPPORTERS FROM THE NORTH, AND THE COMBINED EFFORT IS INTENDED TO MATCH MASSIVE TURNOUT AT OCT 25 OPORTO RALLY.

2. INTER-SUV DISPUTE: LISBON SECRETARIAT OF "SOLDIERS UNITED WILL WIN" (SUV) CRITICIZED SUV CHAPTERS IN INDIVIDUAL LISBON MILITARY UNITS FOR TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE ORGANIZATION'S "PRESTIGE" TO ACHIEVE PARTISAN ENDS. IN STATEMENT RELEASED NOV 4, SECRETARIAT SAID THAT SUV ENDORSEMENT OF SUCH ACTIVITIES AS OCT 23 "POPULAR POWER" DEMONSTRATION DISTRACTED SOLDIERS FROM CURRENT MAJOR OBJECTIVES, I.E., REFUSAL TO PARTICIPATE IN COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY MANEUVERS AND CREATION OF ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN BARRACKS TO KEEP TRACK OF REACTIONARY ACTIVITIES. SECRETARIAT DID, HOWEVER, LEND ITS SUPPORT TO NOV 5 DEMONSTRATION CALLED BY SUV LISBON CHAPTERS TO PROTEST JAILING IN LISBON OF "PROGRESSIVE" OFFICER WHO, WHILE SERVING IN MADEIRA, REFUSED TO EXECUTE ORDERS HE CONSIDERED "COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY". (COMMENT: DISPUTE BETWEEN SUV SECRETARIAT AND INDIVIDUAL CHAPTERS REFLECTS DOMINATION OF THE FORMER BY EXTREME LEFT ELEMENTS WHO EMPHASIZE MILITARY ISSUES, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND AT LEAST SOME OF THE LATTER BY COMMUNIST SYMPATHIZERS).

3. ARMED FORCES GENERAL STAFF PRESENTED SECOND OF ITS WEEKLY TELEVISION PROGRAMS ON NOV 4. OCT 28 PROGRAM HAD FOCUSED ON EFFECTIVE MILITARY DISCIPLINE IN YUGOSLAVIA. NOV 4 PROGRAM SHOWED VIGOROUS, PHYSICAL AND MILITARY TRAINING OF PORTUGUESE MARINES, COMMANDOS, AND PARATROOPS (THE UNITS WHICH MAKE UP MILITARY INTERVENTION GROUP - AMI), AND ALSO PRESENTED

A 1960'S NEWSREEL, PROVIDED BY EMBASSY OF POLAND, WHICH SHOWED DISCIPLINE AND SMART APPEARANCE OF POLISH TROOPS. IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING PROGRAM, TV NEWS PRESENTED INTERVIEW WITH REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL MEMBERS GEN. PEZERAT CORREIA AND CAPT. SOUSA E CASTRO. BOTH OFFICERS CONTRASTED EXCELLENT DISCIPLINE OF TROOPS IN "SOCIALIST" EAST EUROPE WITH POOR DISCIPLINE OF PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES, A THEME THAT HAS BEEN STRUCK REPEATEDLY SINCE THE RECENT VISITS OF PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES TO EASTERN EUROPE.

4. COMMUNISTS BACK MPLA: PCP ON NOV 4 HELD PRO-MPLA INDOOR RALLY IN SACAVEM, AN INDUSTRIAL CENTER OUTSIDE LISBON. PCP AND MPLA SPOKESMEN STRESSED INTERRELATIONSHIP OF MPLA STRUGGLE AND THAT OF PORTUGUESE PROGRESSIVES, CRITICIZED FNLA AND UNITA AS IMPERIALIST PUPPETS, AND CALLED ON GOP TO RECOGNIZE MPLA AS SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE OF ANGOLAN PEOPLE. PCP SEC GEN ALVARO CUNHAL, MEANWHILE, MET FOR SEVERAL HOURS WITH PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES ON NOV 4. NO STATEMENT WAS RELEASED.

5. COMMENT: DEMOCRATIC PARTIES AND PRIME MINISTER AZEVEDO HAVE SEIZED ON A SUCCESSFUL MEANS OF DEMONSTRATING POPULAR SUPPORT FOR SIXTH GOVERNMENT. THE PS AND THE PPD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DELIVER THE NECESSARY CROWDS TO DATE. THEIR SUCCESS HAS CONTRASTED SHARPLY WITH FAILURES OF COMMUNIST AND FAR-LEFT RALLIES OF OCT 23 AND NOV 3. THESE DEMONSTRATIONS REINFORCE THE GOVERNMENT'S AUTHORITY BY DESTROYING THE OFT-REPEATED PCP AND FAR-LEFT ARGUMENT THAT CROWD SIZE IS A MORE IMPORTANT INDICATION OF REVOLUTIONARY SUPPORT THAN "BOURGEOIS" ELECTIONS. AZEVEDO HAS DELIVERED LOW-KEY BUSINESSLIKE SPEECHES IN OPORTO AND FARO; HE HAS INSISTED ON SOCIALIST OBJECTIVES, AND HAS NOT SEIZED OPPORTUNITIES OF RECEPTIVE CROWDS TO ATTACK ENEMIES OF THE GOVERNMENT. HE APPEARS MORE INTERESTED IN DEMONSTRATING TO THE LEFT THE FUTILITY OF ATTACKING HIS GOVERNMENT.

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